

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, JOINT READINESS TRAINING CENTER AND FORT POLK
FORT POLK, LOUISIANA 71459-5341

CIVILIAN PERSONNEL
BULLETIN No. 15-04

05 October 2004

THRIFT SAVINGS PLAN OPEN SEASON
(15 October 2004 - 31 December 2004)

1. The next Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) open season begins 15 October 2004 and ends 31 December 2004. During open season, employees can begin to contribute, increase/decrease the amount of employee contributions, and/or change their future fund allocation(s). To make a TSP open season change, employees may access the Employee Benefits Information System (EBIS) through the web from the ABC-C home page at <https://www.abc.army.mil> or the Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS) by calling the toll-free number, 1-877-276-9287 or 1-877-276-9833 for Hearing Impaired. If an employee does not wish to make an open season change, no action is required. **All TSP open season transactions must be completed by 31 December 2004.**

2. The first effective date for changes made during this TSP open season will be the pay period beginning 12 December 2004. For changes made during the latter part of open season, the effective dates will be pay periods beginning 26 December 2004 and 09 January 2005 respectively.

3. If you are covered by **FERS**, you can now elect to contribute up to **15%** of your basic pay each pay period, and if you are covered by **CSRS**, you can contribute up to **10%** of your basic pay each pay period, up to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) annual limit of \$14,000. In addition, participants who are age 50 and older may elect to contribute up to \$3,000 in 2004 and \$4,000 in 2005 as TSP Catch-Up Contributions. Please see CPB 16-03 for more information on TSP Catch-Up Contributions.

4. Employees can choose among five investment funds:

- Government Securities Investment (G) Fund - invested in short-term, risk-free U.S. Treasury securities that are specially issued to the TSP.

- Fixed Income Index Investment (F) Fund - invested in a bond index fund that tracks the Lehman Brother U.S. Aggregate (LBA) Bond index.
- Common Stock Index Investment (C) Fund - invested in a stock index fund that tracks the large companies included in the Standard & Poor's (S&P) 500 stock index.
- Small Capitalization Stock Index Investment (S) Fund - invested in a stock index fund that tracks medium and small companies included in the Wilshire 4500 stock index.
- International Stock Index Investment (I) Fund - invested in a stock index fund that tracks the 21 countries included in the Morgan Stanley Capital International EAFE (Europe, Australia and Far East) stock index.

5. Recent changes to TSP laws have made it possible for employees newly hired to begin contributing to the TSP during an initial 60-day eligibility period. Your contribution will begin no later than the first full pay period after your agency accepts your election. If you do not make an election within this 60-day period, you must wait until an open season to do so. Your agency automatic 1% contribution and, if you are already contributing, your matching contributions, will begin the last month of the second open season after you are hired.

6. Participants who terminated their contributions during the previous open season (15 April 2004 - 30 June 2004) will be eligible to contribute again during this open season. Participants who terminated their contributions after 30 June 2004 will become eligible to contribute again during the next open season (15 April 2005 - 30 June 2005). **Participants can terminate their contribution at any time.**

7. Please note: Non-contributing FERS employees' Agency Automatic (1 percent) Contributions will automatically go into the "G" Fund unless the employee makes an election allocating the TSP contributions to go to other than 100 percent in the "G" Fund. All eligible FERS employees, even employees not making TSP contributions, may make a TSP election to invest in any or all of the five Funds. This is true even if the employee is not eligible to make an election to begin contributing.

8. When completing your TSP election thru ABC-C, <https://www.abc.army.mil>, please remember the following tips:

a. Employees must first establish a Point Of Entry (POE) Password and Personal Identification Number (PIN) through EBIS in order to access either system.

b. If contributing a dollar amount, make sure that the amount you wish to contribute does not exceed the maximum percentage of your base biweekly pay that is allowed (CSRS 10%; FERS 15%).

c. If you choose to contribute to either the C, F, I or S Fund, be aware that an acknowledgement of risk applies.

d. Be sure to use **multiples of 5%** that equal 100% of your contributions.

e. Visit the TSP Web Site at <http://www.tsp.gov> to obtain additional information about the TSP and to view the latest rates of returns for the five investment funds.

f. You can make **only one** TSP election per open season.

9. If your mailing address has changed, please submit a change of address to Ft Polk CPAC immediately so that your TSP account records can be corrected.

10. TSP open season materials can be obtained from the administrative office of your organization or by visiting the TSP Web Site at <http://www.tsp.gov>.

//original signed//

DONALD R. MALLET

Director, Civilian Personnel

Advisory Center